

**Geology and Geochemistry**  
**of the Fenton Creek Zone**  
(MANITOBA, CANADA)

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Economic Geology



University of Tasmania

Hobart

June, 2002

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## Abstract

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The Fenton Creek deposit is a new Zn-Cu base metal discovery situated 70km southeast of the town of Snow Lake, which hosts numerous polymetallic Zn-Cu and Cu-Zn volcanic hosted massive sulphide (VHMS) deposits. The Fenton Creek deposit was located using airborne EM and MAG techniques and is completely blind with no surface expression as it is overlain by 30m of Paleozoic limestone and dolomite and 20m of muskeg. Diamond drilling has defined an initial geologic resource of 2.3 Mt grading 0.09g/t Au, 20.42g/t Ag, 0.56% Cu and 7.44%Zn.

The deposit consists of two massive sulphide lenses hosted within a mixed sequence of graphitic metasediment and volcanoclastics. Amphibolite grade metamorphism has destroyed most of the primary features in the host rocks and caused a complete recrystallisation and coarsening of the ore. The footwall to the deposit is a quartz-muscovite-sillimanite schist of rhyolitic composition. The immediate hanging wall contains biotite-clinopyroxene-plagioclase schist and amphibole-plagioclase schist of basaltic composition, which is overlain by a substantial thickness of quartz-biotite-sillimanite schist of rhyodacitic composition. The ore position is marked by metasediments including garnetiferous and graphitic metapelite. Analysis of the carbon isotopes from the graphite suggests that the source of the carbon is biogenic, which indicates a seafloor position.

Unlike many of the known and well studied VHMS deposits in the Snow Lake Assemblage which have discordant pipe-like hydrothermal alteration with sericitized peripheries and chloritized cores, the hydrothermal alteration in the Fenton Creek stratigraphy consists of fault related K-feldspar-muscovite (formerly quartz-sericite alteration) that occurs in and around the fault zones and stratiform K-feldspar, muscovite, sillimanite, cordierite and cummingtonite (formerly sericite +/- chlorite alteration) confined to the footwall. The footwall alteration is fairly weak consistent with that found in a stratiform/blanket-like volcanic hosted massive sulphide system. Mass balance calculations indicate that the footwall alteration reflects an overall loss in Si, Al and Na with only minor gains in Ca and Mg.

The ore lenses comprising the Fenton Creek zone contain three different types of mineralisation that include disseminated, semi-massive and massive styles. The massive and semi-massive mineralisation consist of pyrrhotite +/- sphalerite-chalcopryrite while the disseminated mineralisation can be divided into three types of mineral associations (A) Pyrrhotite +/- chalcopryrite-sphalerite, (B) Pyrrhotite +/- galena-chalcopryrite-tetrahedrite (C) Pyrrhotite +/- graphite-chalcopryrite-sphalerite. Spatially type B disseminated mineralized rock is observed proximal to the semi-massive and massive mineralisation while type A and C were observed both in and proximal to the semi-massive and massive styles of mineralisation. Metal zonation studies of section 400N suggest that Zn and Cu dominate the upper lens whereas; the lower lens contains Pb, Ag, and Au. Plotting of the Zn ratio and the Cu ratio indicate the hottest portions of the ore lenses exist down plunge from the thickest portion of massive sulphide intersected.

Geologic features including the arc-rift related basaltic volcanic/volcanoclastic rocks in the immediate hanging wall, overlain by large thicknesses of rhyodacitic volcanoclastics and biogenic carbon in the graphite of the Fenton Creek zone suggest that it may have formed in rift environment as a seafloor/sub-seafloor volcanic hosted massive sulphide deposit. This style of deposit may represent a new and previously unexplored mineralized stratigraphic position within the Snow Lake Assemblage.

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## Acknowledgements

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During the course of my studies and completion of my Masters thesis at Centre for Ore Deposit Studies/School of Earth Sciences countless people have provided me with encouragement, support, friendship and laughter.

First and foremost I would like to thank my advisors Bruce Gemmell and Ron Berry for their guidance and enthusiasm. Their inputs into my studies have enriched both academic and personal development.

My studies and this thesis would also not have been possible without the financial support and sponsorship given to me by Owen Bavinton, Ed Yarrow and David Cass of Anglo American Exploration.

Furthermore, I am grateful for the support given to me from all the people at Hudson Bay Exploration and Development Company Limited, especially Kelly Gilmore, Tom Lewis, Neil Richardson, Gerry Bidwell, Michael Zang, Jim Pickel, Eric Brown, Linda New Wanda Donaldson, Russ Fenton, Edgar Wright, Tim Schwartz, Alistar Callegari, Dan McKeachnie, Jason Dunning and Jim Sparling.

Thanks to the lecturers and researchers at CODES/UTAS including Ross Large, Wally Herrmann, David Cooke, Rob Scott, Andrew Tunks, Garry Davidson, Mike Solomon, Peter McGoldrick, Tony Crawford, Jocelyn McPhie and all those who teach the Masters short courses and assisted me on a one-on-one basis. The short courses and one-on-one meetings helped develop the skills and understanding necessary to complete my thesis.

I also acknowledge and I'm grateful for the help of the support staff including June Pongratz, Alistar Chilcott and Mike Blake for computer/software support; Lynne Vaudrey and Lyn Star for their excellent organizational support; Simon Stevens, Nilar Hlaing and Katie McGoldrick for sample preparation and binding; Chris Higgins and Di Stevens for project finance management and Peter Cornish for maintaining equipment and handling all of my shipping needs.

In addition, I greatly appreciate all of my friends and fellow students in particular Steve Bodon, Andrew Davies, Kirstie Simpson, Sarah Jones, Robin Cantrill, Russell Fulton, Michael Agnew and all of the Masters short course participants.

Special thanks to Cathryn Gifkins whose unconditional love, patience, encouragement and culinary skills kept me strong in mind, body and spirit.

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